

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 55

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the total solar eclipse that will occur in Tennessee on August 21, 2017.

WHEREAS, on Monday, August 21, 2017, a historic natural event will occur across the geographic boundaries of Tennessee, as our State will be in the direct path of a total solar eclipse; and

WHEREAS, a solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun, thereby totally or partly obscuring the image of the Sun for a viewer on Earth; a total solar eclipse occurs when the Moon's apparent diameter is larger than the Sun's, blocking all direct sunlight, turning day into darkness; and

WHEREAS, this will be the first total solar eclipse in the continental United States in thirty-eight years and the first total solar eclipse visible from the southeastern United States since the solar eclipse of March 7, 1970; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee will be one of only seven states in our Nation through which the totality of the eclipse will pass as it crosses the country from the coast of Oregon on the Pacific Ocean to the beaches of South Carolina on the Atlantic Ocean, a trek unmatched since the solar eclipse of 1918; and

WHEREAS, in fact, the path of this total solar eclipse makes landfall exclusively within the United States, making it the first such eclipse since the country's independence in 1776; and

WHEREAS, the August 21, 2017, solar eclipse is expected to be the most-viewed solar eclipse ever due to its location, according to *Astronomy* magazine, and the largest American city with a great view will be Nashville; this will be the first total solar eclipse visible from the State Capitol of Tennessee in 539 years and will not occur again for another 549 years; and

WHEREAS, during the total eclipse, Nashville and Middle Tennessee will experience more than two minutes of “totality,” whereby the true celestial spectacle is revealed: the diamond ring of the Sun’s corona and the ability to see stars in the sky in the daytime; and

WHEREAS, the rare occurrence of this astronomical phenomenon is an excellent educational opportunity for the schoolchildren of Tennessee to learn about science and science education, as no doubt, the Department of Education and school districts across the State will utilize this once-in-a-lifetime occurrence as a teaching tool, studying the event as appropriate to grade level and providing advice as to proper and safe viewing of eclipses; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we specially recognize the total solar eclipse of August 21, 2017, as it presents a unique opportunity to relate science education to a natural event with significance to the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby commemorate the total solar eclipse that will occur in Tennessee on August 21, 2017.

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.